

W I DON'T KNOW

21 Taylor Street Holyoke, MA 01040 (413) 533-6734

Oct 19 '92

RECEIVED

TO: The Federal Communications Commission
Mass Media Bureau
October 13, 1992

This is a petition for rule making change to create a new class of FM commercial broadcast station. The intent is to bring back the "Mom And Pop" broadcasters that the "Industry" devastated, decades ago. There still are people willing to provide such services but the broadcast industry has shut them out completely by manipulating rules and creating stereotypes.

Furthermore, this class of license shall also be dedicated to the advancement of new ideas in the spirit that made this country a world leader. Unlike the FM classes that currently exist, this class will only be available to individuals who are not part of a broadcast entity. All applicants will also have to show good reason for being granted this special class.

In order to insure that all who deserve such authorization has the chance to broadcast in the community they are a part of, there will be no Minimum Distance Separation table. Instead, the applicant will be allowed to operate on a short spaced channel as long as the maximum ERP does not create objectionable interference to existing services. We will not define this level since we feel FCC Engineering would be better suited to determine this.

Although both the industry and the FCC consider "Marketability", "Profitability", and other purely capitalistic factors when determining the worth of services we feel it does not apply in this case since the target demographic may be one that the industry has ignored due to it's unprofitability.

There are also stereotypes that would make it nearly impossible for such a service to be judged fairly in capitalistic terms. For example, "Mom and Pop Radio" will bring personalities like Frank Sinatra, Donald Duck, and other old/young things to mind. In reality a modern "Mom And Pop" radio station would actually play Cyndi Lauper, Go Go's, Tiffany, MC Hammer, and other artists that reach all ages. Even hard rock may be appropriate at times and can play a vital role. There is also what we call a Jetson's factor that makes a modern day "Mom And Pop" station truly unique.

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**The “W I Don’t Know” experiment.
A modern “Mom And Pop” station.**

Since there are no authorized examples of what we are proposing available for analysis I will use the local newspaper accounts of the entity we call “W I Don’t Know” as an example. Our two year search for the perfect format brought us to what you will soon see. Before you read it though, I must mention that it starts with rumors, passed on fabrications, etc. and gets more serious as it goes along.

We also realize that our “Kit” transmitter that we received verbal permission to operate was never meant to go as far as it did, and being forced to operate this way is demeaning to us personally, but it is the best proof we have that what we propose is a public service that can’t be ignored. For that reason I will offer it as an exhibit and hope you can see what is real amidst the hoopla.

Since the FCC was involved from the start I would like to say right here that the verbal permission was the right thing to do and history will show that we all ended up better off for it. I still have faith in the FCC and appreciate the real help we did receive. Hope you treat them well, if you find out who they are.

Please refer to the newspaper article (Exhibit A) attached to this petition.

As you see, we were before our time and my truthfulness behind the mike was so unusual it was newsworthy. That is because the “Industry” doesn’t want the public to think of alcohol as a drug or admit that the advertisements reach young kids, for business purposes. To us it is only simple common sense of the educational type that was part of our usual programming. To the broadcast industry it is truth they normally suppress.

We believe the reporter who was captivated by the computers recitation of my piece concerning the “Satanic Verses” incident, that was at it’s height at the time it was written, was under the impression that religious views were not allowed on air. We occasionally read about various religions from the encyclopedia and this piece was created from what we learned about Iran’s religious beliefs and how their government is a mediator between God and the people. To someone not familiar with our programming it would seem harsh, but to a regular listener it is just more of the candy coated educational programming we specialized in.

I could go further, but I’m sure you now see how much of a difference there was between our format and the industry norm. We were not only ahead of our time in programming but ahead of our time in candor to the degree it started a controversy that put us in a precarious position. Clearly, there has to be a widespread problem in the broadcast industry for this to occur, and points out the need for services such as ours.

Reasons for a new class of station.

- 1) The broadcast "Industry" has lost much of its integrity therefore new entities with new ideas and high degree of candor are desperately needed to ensure it properly serves the needs of the public. Part of the problem is that broadcast services for the younger demographic are also involved in the world of Sex, Drugs, Rock and Roll, and the corruption is being passed on to the impressionable sector of our society in a pointless manner. The other major part of it is due to the industries unwillingness to deviate from the way it has been done for many years. It is too much of a risk for them to try new formats but an entity created for the sole purpose of bringing about positive change would not be caught in that trap.
- 2) There is a need for new services that the current rules and broadcast industry can not accommodate. One example is family oriented programming. This type of format is less profitable than the formats the industry now relies on so it rarely exists. Others would be Classical music and other formats that do not pay for themselves. If there are individuals willing to do what they must to provide such services, they should be allowed to do so.
- 3) Although the existing broadcast industry may not agree, radio is more than just a business. It is one of the public's protectors of Democracy and is vital to a healthy society. With the past trend being toward sex and violence for increased profits the public has lost more than the FCC realizes. Until all broadcasters put the public's well being before profits there will be a need for services such as the one we are proposing. Simply put, the recent rules that the industry was instrumental in creating are dedicated to financial gain, not responsibility. The only way to solve the problem is to provide competition with the necessary integrity. Of course it must be done in a way that doesn't destroy the media it was meant to stimulate.
- 4) After years of considering the AM band we have determined that it is totally obsolete for music broadcast. It is still useful for ethnic broadcast services but would not work with the type of services we are trying to create. This leaves only the FM band as a viable option. With the success of "Project Acorn" we believe DAB may restore AM's vitality and allow services such as we propose to move to that band, but for the foreseeable future existing FM services should share the only viable radio band we have left.
- 5) The intense lobbying that the NAB has been engaged in to limit competition is entirely monopolistic and unfounded. The recession we are experiencing is closing businesses at record levels yet the FM band is still doing remarkably well. The AM band is doing as well as the rest of the business community, while FM is still prospering. Since the additional low power services we propose will not be powerful enough to offer much competition to the larger FM services there should be little conflict.
- 6) If by chance the economic calamity our country is in right now continues, the only services that would remain would be the ones we are proposing that have the ability to remain in operation indefinitely without showing a profit. I know it is hard to imagine the USA resembling Ethiopia in a decade or two but the past decade has seen a steady decline, both economic and social, towards that reality. With no end in sight or even a sign that our leaders are going to do what must be done to take us out of the decline, we need to prepare the broadcast band to survive a severe depression that the industry of today would not survive.

7) The United States has lost it's place as the world leader in new ideas and technologies and is now world renowned for violence, corrupt politics, decadence, and other social problems. This can be evidenced in the foreign media's. In order to get back on track we must allow those who have new ideas to develop them uninhibited. Currently, those who have new ideas in broadcasting are powerless. In our case we were ignored by the FCC, persecuted by the industry, then destroyed by politics. Unless the FCC acts now, and makes a place for new ideas to develop, this country will slip even deeper into obsolescence.

Since "W I Don't Know" is an example of what happens to those who are ahead of their time I can testify that the current rules favor those who have somewhat of a criminal mentality. Genius and riches do not normally go together, especially in broadcasting, therefore the assumption that the "Industry" is best able to provide new ideas is totally false. We only have to look at the NAB's embrace of the foreign "Eureka" DAB system before American developers even had a chance to test theirs to see how the industry is being sold to those who can best fill the pockets of those who claim to be it's leaders. Part time teachers I know from broadcasting school who are the industries best, are the real leaders, and they have many doubts about the NAB. Since the FCC is greatly influenced by the NAB there is no doubt that your being misled by an entity that the industry it claims to represent, doesn't even trust. With such an entity running the Mass Media Bureau even you must admit the geniuses behind the scenes are not being represented. The only way to solve the problem for entities such as ours is to create a new class of license that will allow them to become a part of the system, regardless of what the "Industry" says about it.

This class of station will follow all rules regarding commercial stations except for the following.

- 1) Power levels will range from 1 to 1000 watts. In cases where full ERP will cause interference with existing services the FCC shall impose a limit.
- 2) Licenses will be granted in a one step procedure. The allocation stage only invites trouble for honest people entering broadcasting. I have seen a case where the original applicant was overwhelmed by advertising agencies when they discovered there is a channel available.
- 3) Broadcasting of alcohol commercials, or alcoholic related spots such as Bars will not be allowed. We now know for a fact that alcohol is a very powerful drug. Musicians usually start playing bars, out of necessity, but when a station involves itself in drugs it has a corrupting effect on them. In order for this new class we propose to keep it's integrity, it has to stay out of that world. If the liquor industries claims they have free speech that allows them to advertise on all media's, they need to be reminded their drug has been found to be similar to heroin in both addiction potential and withdrawal symptoms but we do not give pushers free speech to advertise. Liquor advertisements are not allowed in children's programming either, so our desire to make a drug free class of radio station is not unrealistic.
- 4) The new class will have to adhere to a higher standard. In our area there isn't a single profanity that hasn't been used on air and even the worst of "2 Live Crew" is played. Free speech obviously gives some the right to be profane, and is one reason why we are petitioning for a class of license to help drown out the smut. We believe in free speech too and do not argue with their right to broadcast what we consider trash. Our solution is to give radio listeners new services that would not take that course due to the type of service they offer.
- 5) In cases where a nearby class A, B, or C goes off air the holder of a license we are proposing shall be given preferential treatment in acquiring the higher power license. This will speed up the process of bringing new people into the industry, and help purge the band of those who are not providing a "Public Service". Another way of seeing this is to consider the low power class we propose as being in an incubator where they will learn how to manage a higher class station as a business. As the rules are now written newcomers have no place to learn because most local broadcasters would rather destroy them, than help.
- 6) All new rules will be geared for a small family business and FCC user fees will be lower than class "A".
- 7) There will be no special requirement as to location of the land based transmission system as long as it does not exceed safe RF energy exposure levels.
- 8) The number of these low power services may be limited so as not to exceed the number of existing services per community. In cases where it will be new service to a community there shall be no limitation imposed on the applicant.

9) Only adult individuals that do not have a criminal background shall be considered. Those found guilty of a felony would therefore be disqualified. Misdemeanors such as DUI would not if more than 3 years has elapsed since the guilty finding. Other minor offenses would be overlooked as long as they do not prove applicant is a danger to others.

10) Applicants may not be affiliated with an existing broadcast entity or promote an agenda such as Pro-Choice, Pro-Life, Gay rights, etc..

11) In cases where there are more than one request for licensing on a single channel the applicant that is better able to assume the role of a "Mom and Pop" personality shall prevail. Although the applicant need not be married to apply they must be steadily employed in a non-government, non-political job, and be at least 28 years of age. The age requirement is similar to the 35 year limit for US President and ensures they have the necessary maturity, stability, worldly experience. This limit may be changed at your discretion to 21-35.

11) No previous experience in broadcasting is needed but applicants must familiarize themselves with the applicable parts of the CFR.

12) All applicants must first receive a construction permit then demonstrate they have the ability to operate the station for a minimum average of 12 hours per day non-profit by broadcasting for three months commercial free. The address of the station or fax number must be given at least 4 times daily in order that the public may respond in writing. At the end of the period a copy of the station log will be made and the original sent in for review. Copies of all letters and faxes from the public must also be included. In the event there is unfounded negative reaction the applicant may attach an explanation for it and/or provide a tape of the broadcast that led to the incident. Everyone makes honest mistakes and there are people who would send a fabricated letter for the sole purpose of destroying another. Therefore anonymous letters of this type must be included, but will not play a major role in your determination. If the FCC decides in favor of licensing they may begin accepting commercial accounts when said license is granted. Normally this should not take more than a month. If there is a question as to the seriousness of the applicant an additional 3 month trial period could be imposed. At no time can the applicant stop broadcasting, even if the log has been surrendered and licensing is expected.

Problems to anticipate / special note.

Since we understand that the Radio and Music industry work together it may be necessary for the Federal Government to help ensure that the new class of station has the power to acquire music in a fair and honest manner. The health of this class hinges on it's ability to keep up musically and shutting them out would be a good weapon. Of course that would be an unfair business practice, or scandal, but it could happen.

Due to the real need for this new class to exist we feel the FCC deserves the necessary funding. With the widespread realization now taking hold that our country is in trouble and new ideas are needed I feel this venture will be well received by Congress. Being one of the only projects for the Mass Media Bureau that wasn't created by the industry will also help. There are other factors to help you such as a growing movement to scale broadcasters down to size, a growing reliance on sex in broadcasting, etc.. Hopefully the issue of not having the funds to create this new class of station will not be a factor in the outcome of this petition.

We also hope that the viewpoint of the industry is not a factor since the purpose of the new class of broadcast station is to help neutralize their negative effects on the public. The industry has already had it's way in all matters pertaining to commercial broadcasting and for once the publics side deserves to prevail.

An overwhelming majority of the public agrees radio needs new services and for the FCC to continue holding the public trust you must give the other side some attention. We are fully aware of how little thought is usually given to the needs of the public. Especially since we already petitioned for class "A" four times, once with the help of Congressman Silvio O. Conte, and were turned down due to minor short spacing that could have been easily remedied.

With the increase of power allowed to class "A" during that period and increase in spacing requirements we no longer have a chance for class "A" authorization. Since there are no stations in this community, we could not buy one even if one was for sale and we could afford it. Even if there was a station available, this area is good for radio so any station would be out of the price range of a working person who lives in this City. With all that against us, this petition is the only way for us to service this community with the programming it needs and deserves.

Please don't do it to us again!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gary S. Gaulin".

Gary S. Gaulin

be the first educational message station," he said. "Where the commercials used to be, we put in positive, educational messages." Actually, there are no commercials on W I DON'T KNOW.

Gary figures he is about two years and \$100,000 away from licensing and going to high power, when he expects to go commercial.

Cylon warrior from "Battlestar Galactica" play Adrian Cronauer.

"And then it gives a station ID every 15 minutes. It's got a schedule like any radio station," Gary said. He types in weather and news reports — phonetically spelled for ease of electronic elocution — that Mr. DJ reads hourly.

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Gary insists that he isn't a radio pirate.

"If I was a pirate, I'd build a powerful transmitter and transmit all the way to Connecticut," he said. "We're just a kit station." In other words, W I DON'T KNOW

"We're not fooling around here. I know all about the regulations," Gary said.

Gary wants to get the point across to the FCC that this is a public service station.

"We're trying to make people more aware of what things are, like what religion is," he said.

FCC pulls radio station's plug

By JULES CRITTENDEN
Transcript-Telegram staff

HOLYOKE — There's only static today at 105.3 FM where W I DON'T KNOW used to be, and if you want "Mr. DJ" back, you'd better let the Federal Communication Commission know about it.

The FCC paid a visit Thursday afternoon to Gary and Laurie Gaulin — the unauthorized broadcasters of Holyoke's only FM radio station — and quietly asked them to turn it off. In the interest of getting a low power license to broadcast, the Gaulins complied.

Until Thursday, they had been broadcasting the music of Tangerine Dream, Twisted Sister, the

B-52s, and John Philip Sousa out of their Elmwood home for more than a year, 24 hours a day. Between the songs, Gary Gaulin went on the air with assaults on alcoholism and other social ills, throwing in his own views on subjects such as religion and science.

Mr. DJ — the robotic disc spinner who is part computer, part compact disc recorder and part voice synthesizer — took over when the Gaulins took a break, and delivered the news and weather in electronic monotone.

Gary Gaulin was on his way home for lunch Thursday when he spotted the man at Martin Street aiming an electronic direction finder at his attic.

"I knew what he had in his hands. It was a homing device, and he had it pointed right at my antenna," Gaulin said. "So I went home, all nervous, wolfed down a tuna fish sandwich, and waited for him to come."

He also put a call through to the newspaper, figuring that if the FCC was going to start hauling his equipment out, he wanted the world to know about it. But it didn't come to that.

The man from the FCC was polite but firm.

"He said that we should go off the air for the time being, so as not to jeopardize the future," Gaulin said. "He said that our sound

quality, by the way, was beautiful."

"He's a very talented young man," said Victor Tagliaferro, a senior engineer in the FCC's New England enforcement division. But he added, "They can't operate, period and they must shut off."

Tagliaferro heard about the station by word of mouth. When he drove into Holyoke Thursday, he picked up W I DON'T KNOW on Interstate 91. He followed the signal down Northampton Street and located the house within 15 minutes.

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●Radio

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"Unfortunately, our kit was built a little too good," Gaulin said. "We were definitely a little over there with the kind of antenna we had."

Tagliaferro said that Gaulin may qualify for a low power license to fill a local void on the FM band, but he will have to apply

through the FCC's Washington D.C. office.

Towards that end, Gaulin is looking for support and will try to launch a write-in campaign in the city to let the FCC know that Holyoke wants him.

"We're going to start preparing for the big time," Gaulin said.

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Vincent Kajunski, the engineer in charge of the FCC's New

Home broadcaster vows to re-start station

By SANDRA E. CONSTANTINE

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Continued from front page

society and seeing what they're doing with the air waves," Gary said Thursday. "It was wall-to-wall beer commercials and devil worship music. It was like no one was learning anything out of radio."

"Probably the biggest message that I'm trying to get across to the kids... to the people, is that you've got to keep learning. You can have a lot of fun with learning and science."

Gary wants to promote some kind of moral sense in a world where morals are easily lost or twisted.

"One of our intents was to play music that is good, that's lively, but won't screw up their heads," Gary said.

If he thinks a lyric might be misinterpreted, he'll go on the air with an explanation.

"The object of our station is to be the first educational music station," he said. "Where the commercials used to be, we put in positive, educational messages." Actually, there are no commercials on W I DON'T KNOW.

Gary figures he is about two years and \$100,000 away from licensing and going to high power, when he expects to go commercial.

He isn't sure where the money for the high-power, FCC-approved equipment will come from.

For now, the station is staffed by Gary, his wife Laurie, and a Jameco PC hooked up to a Micro-Vox text-to-speech synthesizer.

"We call him 'Mr. DJ,'" said Laurie, who divides her time during the day between housework, caring for two children, and plugging in the station IDs. Mr. DJ takes over when Gary and Laurie feel like giving it a break.

"It takes all the songs that are on the CD cartridge, and it shuffles it up like a deck of cards," said Gary, who considers Mr. DJ a machine, and won't call it "he" the way Laurie does.

"It announces every song before it plays it," Gary said. He punched a few keys and had Mr. DJ announce a song. This was more or less like listening to a Cylon warrior from "Battlestar Galactica" play Adrian Cronauer.

"And then it gives a station ID every 15 minutes. It's got a schedule like any radio station," Gary said. He types in weather and news reports — phonetically spelled for ease of electronic elocution — that Mr. DJ reads hourly.

For example:

"THE EYEATOLA HO MAINEE REALLY DID IT THIS TIME," reads a bulletin on the ongoing "Satanic Verses" controversy. "WHAT A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF RELIGIOUS FENATIS CIZM... MOST ISLAMIC PEOPLE ARE NOT CRAZY LIKE HOMAINEY. ITS JUST THAT HOMAINEY TALKS TO GOD EVERY DAY LIKE TV EVANGELISTS AND HE CHANGES THE RELIGION AS HE GOES."

ALL IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS LIKE THIS ARE REE PEETED HOWERLY. THANK YOU."

The transmitter itself Gary built from instructions he found in "Radio Electronics" magazine.

"If you want your own, you just get this magazine, open it up and you're on the air," he said, switching CDs. The monitor played Cindy Lauper, "Money Changes Everything."

Gary insists that he isn't a radio pirate.

"If I was a pirate, I'd build a powerful transmitter and transmit all the way to Connecticut," he said. "We're just a kit station." In other words. W I DON'T KNOW

is just a weird hobby.

The FCC may not agree with that, he acknowledged, despite his low power, below the level where they normally begin to take note. FCC officials did not return telephone calls Friday.

"The FCC could fly their planes over my house all day long and they'd never find us, we're so small," Gary said of reports that the FCC was looking for him. Not that he's trying to hide. He says he has called the FCC himself a number of times.

He ran a computer search to find the cleanest local frequency he could. The nearest competition for 105.3 FM is WBBS in Great Barrington, and he is only a little more than a kilometer into that station's legal territory. That is a technicality that can be sorted out with the FCC in the licensing process, he said.

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Gary wants to get the point across to the FCC that this is a public service station.

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through the FCC's Washington D.C. office.

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Friday, March 3, 1989

Home broadcaster vows to re-start station

By SANDRA E. CONSTANTINE

HOLYOKE — A Hitchcock Street couple plans to begin broadcasting anew from their home-based radio station, "W, I don't know," as soon as they receive an operating license from the Federal Communications Commission, they said yesterday.

Gary and Laurie Gaulin of 69 Hitchcock St. were ordered to shut down their station Thursday, when an official from the FCC's Boston office traced the station's signal to their house.

"I'm not going to go on again until I have a license in my hand," Gary Gaulin said yesterday.

Gaulin asked that people who like his station help him get a license by writing to the FCC in Washington, D.C., 20554.

The station, which used to broadcast over 105.3 FM, was heard within about a mile of the couple's home.

Gaulin said he has been broadcasting from his dining room using home-built equipment for the last two years. Over the last year, he has broadcast 24 hours a day using a computer he has dubbed "Mr. D.J." to act as the emcee. "It's kind of like we're living in a radio station," Gaulin

said.

The station has specialized in music of Todd Rundgren and Information Society, and the New Age music of David Lanz. At night the 32-year-old Gaulin sometimes talks about the dangers of drug use.

"Our format is totally different. We're trying to be an educational station that plays good music that people like to hear," Gaulin said.

Starting at age 14, Gaulin began working with radio equipment and reading about electronics with the dream of someday creating his own station.

"What I wanted to do with my life was to build a radio station," Gaulin said.

The signal is beamed out from a transmitter in the Gaulin's attic.

Gaulin said he built his transmitter according to the instructions in an electronics magazine for the type of wireless stereo link people use to tune into their indoor stereo music on a radio in their back yard.

"I really didn't feel that it was very illegal since the transmitter had the same amount of power listed as the one in the magazine," Gaulin said. "It was a kit that probably hundreds of people had. I

just had a real good antenna hooked up to it.

"It really doesn't put you into the realm of anything major illegal. It's like half of your car making it through the intersection before it turns red."

Gaulin said he is very hopeful of getting an FCC license because he carries a very strong anti-drug message, playing the Twisted Sister song "We're Not Gonna Take It" as an anti-drug dispatch.

Gaulin said the FCC informed him Thursday that in one direction he is three times over the power threshold for which a radio license is required.

The Holyoker said he just kept fine tuning the equipment, gradually increasing its power.

However, Gaulin said he called the FCC's Washington, D.C., office before he began to broadcast and asked about the legality of his operation.

"I more or less got the message 'Don't cause any objectionable interference and you'll be alright,'" Gaulin said, declining to name the official with whom he spoke.

Gaulin said he called his station "W, I don't know" because he does not know what call letters he will

be assigned if the FCC grants him a license.

Vincent Kajunski, the engineer in charge of the FCC's New England office in Boston, said first-time offenders like the Gaulins are usually slapped with a \$750 a fine. The FCC investigated the station after getting reports of it from Holyoke residents, Kajunski said.

Laurie, 29, a housewife, frequently takes over the operation of the station in between caring for the couple's two daughters, Jennifer, 5, and Crystal, 2.

Union-News
SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1989

On the air faintly, Holyoke's radio jock

By JULES CRITTENDEN
Transcript-Telegram staff

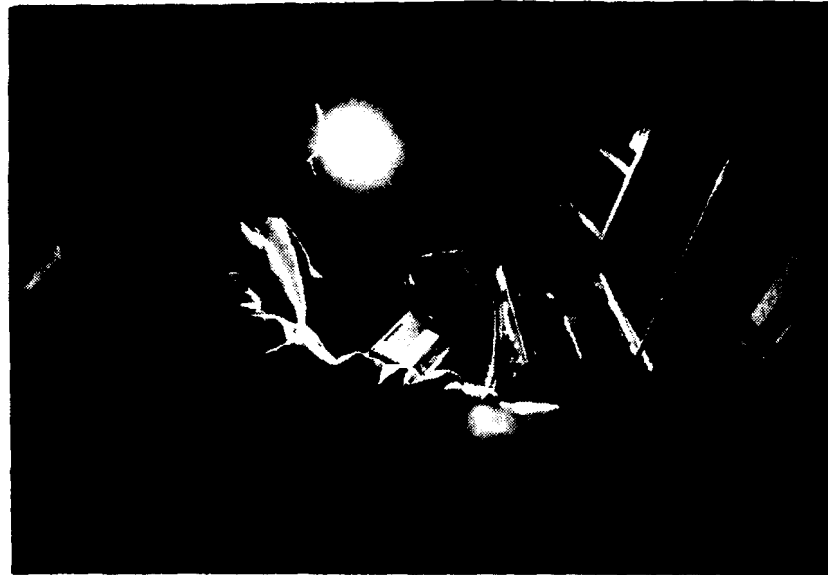
There's only one station that plays Herbie Hancock, John Philip Sousa and Twisted Sister in an educational format, with "Mr DJ," your own robotic disc spinner, and it's in Holyoke.

W I DON'T KNOW. Like nothing you've listened to at least since 1968, and you'd better tune in quick. Because the feds may be on their way to shut it down. But you have to find it first. Thursday, that meant taking a weird trip along the dial and through the weird world of American radio.

Skrrrrch — "For all you yuppies out there who listen to STCC-FM because for some reason you kind of like the music, but when I say" — *Skrrrrch* — "The soft, relaxing music even your boss can listen to" — *Skrrrrch* — "leaves are gone/And the sky is gray/I went for a walk/on a winter's" — *Skrrrrch* — "is the anniversary of the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima. Remember that picture, Dan? What was the name of the mountain? ... Wwwwrrrong. It's Mount Surabachi. That means the jackpot's going to grow, Dan" — *Skrrrrch* —

Then, at 105.3 FM, Tangerine Dream fading in and out.

"... and if you don't think all these ads are raising our kids to be alcoholics, you'd better think again... FM 105.3, this is W I DON'T KNOW — when we hit the



Transcript-Telegram/Larry Alpaugh

In radioland: Gary G. of Holyoke, 32, is the man behind W I DON'T KNOW, a low-powered radio station that is aimed at educating its listeners. You'll find him, his talking computer and his radio program at FM 105.3. That is, unless the Federal Communications Commission finds him first. Gary G. is not authorized to broadcast.

Bigtime, no beer commercials!!!!
Jackpot.

Emanating from Elmwood, from a house that looks like any other on its street, a scant 10 milliwatts of power just about carry W I DON'T KNOW up one end of Northampton Street and down the other. You're likely to lose the signal as you head downtown on Dwight Street or South Street, though you may pick it up again in Fairview, Aldenville or parts of South Hadley.

"External antennas pick us up good, but if you're in a house, you won't get us, because we don't put out enough power to make it through the walls," said Gary G., 32, unauthorized broadcaster. Gary spoke on the condition that

his identity be kept a secret. He isn't too worried about the Federal Communications Commission, which thinks he's a radio pirate and wants to shut him down. It's his landlady and his mother he's trying to keep pacified.

In March 1988, Gary went on the air 24 hours a day with a CD player, a transmitter he put together from Radio Shack, an antenna in the attic and a computer that he taught to play disc jockey. He had been playing with electronics ever since his student days at Chicopee Comprehensive High School.

"What really possessed me to go ahead and do it was watching

See RADIO, back of section

FCC searches for pirate radio station

By SANDRA E. CONSTANTINE

HOLYOKE — The Federal Communications Commission is investigating reports of a pirate radio station calling itself "W, I Don't Know" and operating in the city, an FCC official confirmed yesterday.

Victor Tagliaferro, senior engineer with the FCC New England field office in Boston, said he has received reports of a station using the FM band from 88 to 108 in Holyoke without a license.

At this time, Tagliaferro said he does not know the exact frequency the station is using, its hours of transmission, or if it is operating between authorized channels.

However, a city resident who asked not to be identified, said the station can be picked up at 95.3 FM in the vicinity of Northampton and Beech Streets. The resident said the station plays New Wave music and is narrated by a computerized voice.

Federal law dictates radio stations must obtain a license with the FCC before broadcasting over the airwaves. Section 301 of the

federal Communications Act of 1934 allows for a fine of \$10,000 or a year in jail, or both, for operating over the airwaves without FCC authorization.

The proper process for getting such a license is to file an application for a \$500 fee and then get FCC clearance, according to Tagliaferro.

Usually, prospective radio station operators either buy a station already operating on an FCC-approved frequency or else apply to use a vacant channel if one is available.

Tagliaferro said the FCC is charged with monitoring channels because otherwise they could interfere with each other's signals.

"It would be chaos," Tagliaferro said.

The FCC official said the operator of the pirate station needs only an antenna with transmitting capabilities to use the airwaves. The operator could be anyone "with some technical ability with radio equipment," Tagliaferro said.

This could be a ham radio operator, according to Tagliaferro, who said CB radio operators don't have the capacity to transmit on radio airwaves.

"Anyone could conceivably do it if they have the right equipment and technical know-how with radio

equipment," Tagliaferro.

"I think it's just the interest in electronics more than anything else, but there is an element of pirate radio, a group that gets their kicks out of doing this."

About a year and a half ago, the FCC closed down a pirate radio station operating out of New York City Harbor from a yacht named

"Sarah" that was outfitted with radio equipment.

Tagliaferro said the station, which played rock 'n' roll, was run by people in their 20s.

FCC officials have equipment that allows them to track and quickly locate such pirate stations and shut them down, the official said.